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COMMON AIMS OF CULTURE AND RESEARCH IN THE UNIVERSITY¹

By definition universities aim to compass the whole range of knowledge. In practical operation they are characterized rather more by diversity than by unity of effort. It is in the nature of things that bodies so constituted should attempt to express the various phases of thought represented through many kinds of organization, and we expect to see philological, chemical, biological and other types of clubs or societies forming a normal part of the machinery of every great educational institution. According to the particular interests of the moment these agencies within the walls group themselves in different ways to accomplish specific kinds of service.

The most interesting of all organizations peculiar to the university are the two widely inclusive societies representing scholarship or culture in Phi Beta Kappa and research and science in Sigma Xi. These two bodies express in their aims nearly the whole range of higher purposes of academic effort. It has seemed to me that a study of their interrelations, extending to a redefinition of their common objects, might help to set forth that continuously needful statement and restatement of the reason for existence of institutions of higher learning. Inclination to consider the purposes of these societies has been particularly strong as the course of my life has carried me into contact with research and education in such a manner as to bring into close relation, and yet into striking contrast, the types of academic mind which we call scientific and humanistic. Having seen these interests so frequently defined with special reference to their separateness the desire has grown

¹ Presented as the annual address before Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi, University of Pennsylvania, June 13, 1921.